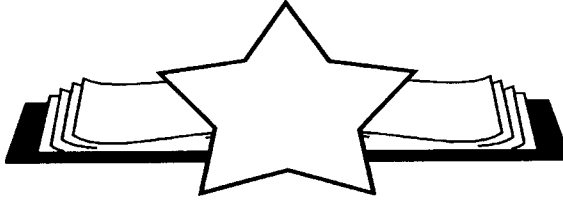


NEW JERSEY

2000-2001

Guidelines and Application

STAR



SCHOOLS

**Deadline for Application to County Office:
NOVEMBER 27, 2000**

The Star School application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page

| | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--------------|
| County | <u>Bergen</u> | | |
| District (Proper Name) | <u>Midland Park Public Schools</u> | | |
| Address | <u>31 Highland Avenue</u> | | |
| | Street/P. O. Box | <u>Midland Park, New Jersey</u> | <u>07432</u> |
| | City | | Zip Code |
| Telephone 201-444-1400 | Fax 201-444-3051 | Email _____ | |
| Chief School Administrator | <u>August De Preker</u> | | |
| Nominated School (Proper Name) | <u>Highland-Godwin Elementary School</u> | | |
| Address | <u>41 E. Center Street</u> | | |
| | Street/P. O. Box | <u>Midland Park, New Jersey</u> | <u>07432</u> |
| | City | | Zip Code |
| Telephone 201-445-5350 | Fax 201-652-5709 | Email <u>lexteach1@AOL.com</u> | |
| Principal | <u>Frederick M. Triano, Jr.</u> | | |
| Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature | <u>August C. DePreker</u> | | |

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLYApproved: ☒ Yes ☐ No County Superintendent's SignatureCarol P. Graham

**NEW JERSEY
STAR SCHOOLS
2000-2001 APPLICATION**

RESPONSES to the information below and the statements must be ANONYMOUS. No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school or the community. Use the words "the school" in referring to the applicant in the responses to the statements.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application: | | |
| Type of School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | Grade Levels <input type="checkbox"/> K - <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | School Enrollment <u>700</u> Name of the School's Specialization or Whole-School Reform Model <u>Partners in Learning</u> <u>A Collaborative School</u> <u>Model</u> |
| Location: <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/city; <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban with urban characteristics; <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town; <input type="checkbox"/> Rural | | |
| Previous Star School: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, Year(s) _____ | | |

KEYBOARDED RESPONSES to the statements below must be **no more than a total of five pages**. Keyboard the statement followed by the response.

1. Describe the school's specialization or whole-school reform model and its objectives, the student educational needs and the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,** that it addresses. Detail how it promotes high student achievement and contributes to school-wide accomplishments.
2. Describe the professional development activities and research of the school's faculty. Detail to what extent these activities contribute to exemplary teaching practices in their classrooms. Explain the link between these activities and the specialization or whole-school reform model.
3. Describe the leadership style of the school's administration and how the management and educational program demonstrate administrative and fiscal efficiency. Describe any innovative scheduling and/or management strategies implemented.
4. Describe the school's overall approach to assessment. How are your methods aligned to the specialization or whole-school reform model? How are you ensuring that the content you are measuring is consistent with the *Core Curriculum Content Standards*? Provide student performance data for the school years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 using state tests and, if you wish, national and/or district standardized norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or alternative assessments. Explain any dramatic increase or decrease. Specify which groups, if any, are excluded from the assessments for which you provide data. Give the percentage of students excluded. You may use a chart.
5. Describe collaborative efforts with families, business, the community, school districts, and/or higher education that contribute to a school environment governed by the students' needs and promoting high student achievement.
6. **Previous Star School Winners Only:** Provide a one-page addendum to your application that describes efforts to expand or replicate the specialization or whole-school reform model within the school and/or the district. Have there been dissemination activities beyond the school or district? If so, please elaborate.

*The May 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.
6apps.20

1. **Describe the school's specialization or whole-school reform model and its objectives, the student educational needs and the *Core Curriculum Content and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards* that it addresses. Detail how it promotes high student achievement.**

In 1996, our school district and a special services school district entered into a collaborative relationship and were awarded a grant from the State Department of Education to enhance programming for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. We took a bold step toward true educational **diversity** and **inclusion**, and established the "**Partners in Learning Program**". Our elementary school now includes approximately 80 hearing-impaired students within a total population of 700. This initiative not only adds diversity but also, more importantly, provides **life experience** for students and faculty alike to become more sensitive to those who are disabled. Historically, most hearing-impaired students studied in self contained classrooms dedicated to deaf culture with little exposure to mainstreaming and/or integration. These students can experience difficulty transitioning into the hearing world. Clearly, our school addresses this concern. The overall goal is to create a broader understanding of the diverse world in which **all** students live.

The **objective** of this partnership is to provide an **inclusion** program which enables hearing-impaired students to maximize their participation in regular education with their hearing peers while addressing their unique learning needs. The collaborative teaching model, other program options, and the specialized training of staff benefits **both** hearing and hearing-impaired students socially, emotionally, as well as academically. It is our hope that our integrated setting will better prepare the students to demonstrate greater independence, master academic subjects with greater ease, demonstrate increasing motivation and self-esteem, gain a growing awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, participate in an everwidening scope of creative activities and interact socially in the world at large. It is also our hope that non-handicapped students and their families will gain knowledge about the nature, culture and societal contributions of the hearing-impaired and will demonstrate a growing sensitivity to and acceptance of persons with handicaps within the community.

Our school offers an array of programming options from mainstreaming, to full inclusion, to small group instruction, to one-to-one settings. Each hearing-impaired student is placed in a homeroom with his/her age appropriate peers. A "**partnership in learning**" (collaborative) model is set up where a teacher of the deaf and regular education teacher plan and work together throughout the day. Interpreters and aides are available as needed. Speech therapists and audiologists meet with students daily. Speech infusion takes place in all classrooms each week. This program provides all students with expressive language and communication skills.

Our program uses a unique dual track communication system, delivering both an oral/aural approach and total communication (TC) approach. The auditory-oral method emphasizes the development of listening and oral skills. The total communication method incorporates sign language and finger spelling, in addition to speech, speech reading and auditory amplification. In both approaches, communication skills and language development are emphasized. In some classes, sign language is taught to all students to enhance lessons, concepts in vocabulary, science and social studies. This expands visual and kinesthetic learning modalities for students.

The "**Partners in Learning Program**" has gone beyond the traditional special education curriculum in order to effectively prepare hearing-impaired students for the

future. Our curriculum emphasizes a developmentally appropriate and multidisciplinary approach. Our **focus** is on **academic skills, social skills, communication, acceptance of diversity, and respect for all**. We appeal to the whole child -- their emotional, social, intellectual and physical needs.

Recently, our curriculum was updated to include the ***Core Curriculum Content and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*** at all grade levels. Due to the fact that our hearing-impaired students sit side-by-side with their hearing peers and receive the same high quality curriculum, our model addresses all disciplines and crosses all grade levels. However, we feel our program particularly highlights areas in Language Arts and Literacy. **Standard 3.1** states that all students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences. This is continually supported as our hearing-impaired students have opportunities to build their language skills during classroom discussions on literature, and participation in plays, musicals and academic/multi-media presentations. **Standard 3.2** states that all students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources. Our model provides students with daily exposure to language and communication with lessons prepared by teams of teachers and specialists. **Standard 3.5** states that all students will view, understand, and use nontextual visual information. In our collaborative classrooms, a variety of instructional methods and media are used to appeal to the individual needs of our hearing-impaired students, but benefit all students. All teachers use overhead projectors, charts graphs, computers and microphones during their lessons. Many classrooms have "Sound Field Systems" to enhance instruction for all students. **Workplace Standards 1 and 4** are addressed on a daily basis as students develop interpersonal skills by working on cooperative teams, classroom presentations, cross grade level projects and school wide units of study.

2. **Describe the professional development activities and research of the school's faculty. Detail to what extent these activities contribute to exemplary teaching practices in their classrooms. Explain the link between these activities and the specialization or whole-school reform model.**

Every aspect of the "**Partners in Learning Program**" has been designed to furnish our students with a **high quality** education. Our success is due, in large, to special training and research by the entire school staff. Nowhere in the eastern region of the United States does there exist a complete continuum of program options for hearing-impaired students within a regular K-12 public education setting. Therefore, to shape our program the staff relies heavily on research and the application of effective/relevant strategies from various training opportunities.

Professional development and research has included:

- **Collaborative Instruction** – Nannette Baker, Educational Consultant, provided a series of seminars on team teaching and collaboration.
- **Learning Styles** – Carol Flexor facilitated workshops to all faculty
- **Deaf Awareness/Inclusion** – Mary Ellen Nevins of Kean College is a consultant to the program and has provided training workshops.
- **Auditory-Oral Approach** – collaborative teams visited the Clarke School for the Deaf in Massachusetts.
- **Early Childhood Programs for the Deaf** – Staff visited Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, and participated in their "out reach" program.

- **Integrated/Infused Speech** –Dr. Christina Perrigo, a noted speech and language pathologist in the field of deafness, has been a consultant to our program. She provides training for classroom teachers and speech teachers.
 - **Preschool for Deaf Students** – Maura McGuire, Teacher of the Deaf, is an expert on cognitive development and is an ongoing consultant to our staff.
 - **Deaf Awareness and Cochlear Implants** – Kathleen Treni our program director is our on-sight expert. She wears a Cochlear Implant.
 - **Peer Training/Coaching** – Our experienced teachers are a **wonderful** resource to all staff. They share their knowledge during faculty meetings, in-service days, monthly collaborative breakfasts and grade level team meetings.
 - **Inclusion** – Dr. Richard Villa offered training on “The Inclusive Classroom”
 - Other staff development topics for our entire district have included **Cooperative Learning, Learning Styles, Multiple Intelligences, Authentic Assessment, Technology in the Classroom, and Building a Child’s Emotional Intelligence.**
3. Describe the leadership style of the school’s administration and how the management and educational program demonstrate administrative and fiscal efficiency. Describe any innovative scheduling and/or management strategies implemented.

The “Partners in Learning Program” is run on a two building campus. There is a principal who oversees the entire elementary program. His office is located in the grades 3-6 building and he manages the day-to-day operation of this facility. The assistant principal is our resident early childhood expert. Her office is located in the Pre-K –2 building and she manages the daily operation of this facility. There is one program director who manages the hearing impaired program at the elementary level (and, also the secondary hearing-impaired program, at our high school). We also have a “teacher in charge” and two child study team members who assist in overseeing all student and program issues at the elementary level. **Together**, these administrators/staff members have established an **extremely** cooperative, positive, respectful and productive **team** atmosphere throughout the campus.

In recent years, the majority of public concerns have focused on local school budgets. The result: local districts now have budget “caps” which cannot be exceeded without voter approval. In order to serve the county’s youth with high quality educational programming, communities are calling for the efficient and effective sharing of resources. Our program demonstrates the advantages of **interagency collaboration** both **educationally** and **fiscally**. Each entity has become familiar with the other’s philosophical approach, has mutual interests, communicates frequently, maintains positive attitudes toward change, and possesses the essential finances, resources and desire to deliver an **outstanding** program.

4. Describe the school’s overall approach to assessment. How are your methods aligned to the specialization of whole school reform model? How are you ensuring that the content you are measuring is consistent with the *Core Curriculum Content Standards*? Provide students performance data for the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 using state tests and, if you wish, national and/or district standardized norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or alternative assessments. Explain any dramatic increase or decrease. Specify which groups, if any, are excluded from the assessments for which you provide data, Give the percentage of students excluded. You may use a chart.

We have found that the unique design of our program has provided the best environment for our students to succeed. Our curriculum and assessment methods are

meaningful, intellectual and developmentally appropriate. The “whole” child is always considered and individual progress/growth is continually praised in all classroom settings. It is our belief that no one method of assessment can provide what each student needs. We have made a place for both standardized tests and authentic assessment in our school. The following items/samples are collected for student portfolios: standardized test scores, criterion reference tests, chapter or unit tests, reading responses, reading logs, writing samples across the curriculum, anecdotal records, retellings, teacher-made tests, rubrics, checklists, reading inventories, student self-assessments, parent surveys, and photographs. As a result of these various measures/methods we feel we have a better understanding of how students go about problem solving, communicating and self-assessing. Our goal is to continue to give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they can do in all areas across the curriculum.

Students in the mainstream setting have demonstrated the ability to function on/or above grade level. Students in the collaborative classrooms have been afforded the opportunity to learn with their hearing peers and have also demonstrated academic progress in all areas. These accomplishments have been demonstrated on the Terra Nova Achievement Test. The Terra Nova was chosen by the district two years ago, because we felt it is more closely aligned with the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards.

The scores being reported are the national Percentile Scores for each grade level. National Percentiles compare the students in each grade level tested in our district with other students of the same grade nationally. The average range is defined as the middle fifty (50) percent of students’ scored nationally. Besides the listing of the 1999/2000 Terra Nova results, this report also lists the results of the 1998/99 Terra Nova, the first year this test was given. These scores demonstrate not only the district’s present levels of achievement as compared to the rest of the nation, but also, a comparison of the scores in the first and second year of testing.

TERRA NOVA TOTAL READING

| GRADE | 1999 | 2000 | +/- '99 |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 2 | 85 | 83 | -2 |
| 3 | 66 | 76 | +10 |
| 5 | 79 | 84 | +5 |
| 6 | 81 | 73 | -8 |

TERRA NOVA TOTAL LANGUAGE

| GRADE | 1999 | 2000 | +/- '99 |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 2 | 87 | 83 | -4 |
| 3 | 71 | 81 | +10 |
| 5 | 80 | 78 | -2 |
| 6 | 84 | 74 | -10 |

TERRA NOVA TOTAL MATH

| GRADE | 1999 | 2000 | +/- '99 |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 2 | 81 | 81 | 0 |
| 3 | 75 | 80 | +5 |
| 5 | 84 | 85 | +1 |
| 6 | 87 | 81 | -6 |

In May 2000, for the second time, the State’s new Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) was administered to the fourth grade.

ESPA MAY 2000 RESULTS

| TESTING AREAS | NUMBER OF STUDENTS | PARTIALLY PROFICIENT | PROFICIENT | ADVANCED PROFICIENT |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|
| LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY | 78 | 24.4% (19) | 74.4% (58) | 1.3% (1) |
| MATH | 78 | 16.7% (13) | 53.8% (42) | 29.5% (23) |
| SCIENCE | 78 | 0% | 53.8% (42) | 46.2% (36) |

ESPA MAY 1999 RESULTS

| TESTING AREAS | NUMBER OF STUDENTS | PARTIALLY PROFICIENT | PROFICIENT | ADVANCED PROFICIENT |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|
| LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY | 72 | 11.1% | 87.5% (63) | 1.4% (1) |
| MATH | 72 | 15.3% | 51.4% (37) | 33.3% (24) |
| SCIENCE | 72 | 1.4% | 40.3% (29) | 58.3% (42) |

Our Recent Awards and Accomplishments:

- In 1997, our elementary school was honored by the Department of Education as a **National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence**.
 - In 1997, our "Partners in Learning Program" was chosen by the New Jersey Disabilities Council to receive an award for **Exemplary Practice in Inclusive Education**.
 - In 1997, the "Partners in Learning Program" was selected by Exceptional Parents Magazine to be one of five programs nation-wide to receive the **Award for Excellence in Education**.
 - In 1997 and 1998, the "Partners in Learning Program" was featured by the NJEA on the network television show "**Classroom Close-Up**".
 - In July 2000, several staff members were honored by presenting a workshop which highlighted our collaborative program at the **Alexander Graham Bell Convention** in Philadelphia.
 - In November 2000, Candace Mascia, Teacher of the Deaf presented a workshop on Library Education for Students with Special Needs at the **NJEA Convention** in Atlantic City.
5. **Describe collaborative efforts with parents, business, the community and/or higher education that contribute to a school environment governed by the students' needs and promoting high student achievement.**

The "**Partners in Learning Program**" also provides a "Partnership with Parents". Parents are embraced as essential partners in the education of their children. When the program began we formed a Parents Advisory Council to foster and strengthen communication. Our administrative and teaching staff also provide parent workshops and work closely with the joint Parent-Teacher Association.

Interest in our program has intensified over the past three years, prompting us to provide meetings and tours for districts in our region, and an annual "open house for community members. Our program has also become a focus for surrounding Teacher Education Programs. Professors and students from Kean College and Ramapo College visit regularly, study our model, and use it for their training and learning.

We are extremely proud of our place in the community, our ability to interface with local college faculties and students, and the impact we are having on future trends in inclusive education.